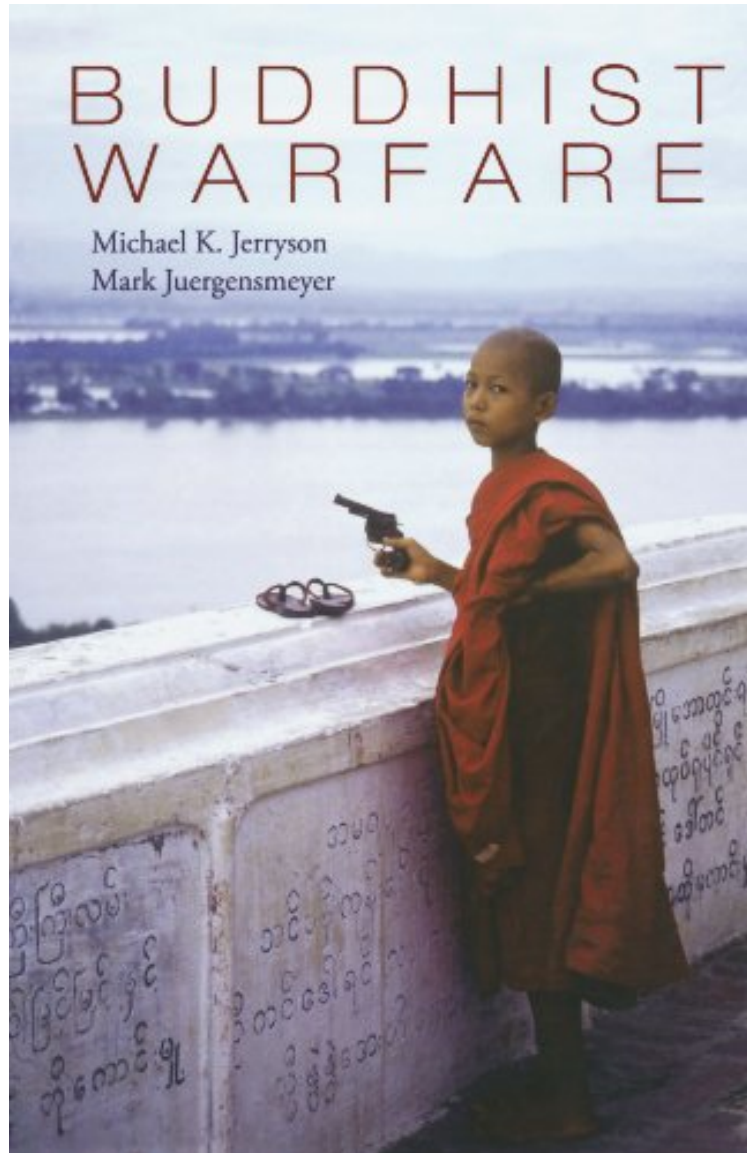


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Buddhist Warfare

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From Michael Jerryson : Buddhist Warfare before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Buddhist Warfare:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. When it comes to violence, Buddhism is no different than other religionsBy edsetiadiBuddhism is a very diverse religion. It has so many different sects, cultures and leaders that are bind together solely by the teachings of the Buddha. The religion has no unifying canonical scriptures, and each tradition consist of unique set of practices and doctrines that are different from one another, with each version of

Buddhism is deeply embedded into the local culture. This, as an effect, makes the subject of Buddhism and its violence a complicated matter and its analysis a monumental challenge. Which is why, perhaps, there are not that many books that cover the subject, and this in return makes our basic perception of the religion become distorted by the peaceful image we see on the surface. This book is the attempt to address this misconception. It is written with the utmost respect for the religion, not for "exposing the truth" but to understanding the complete picture through reading the scriptures and analysing the impacts throughout history. Its world-class research is conducted by the experts on the field: 11 of the best scholars on the subject, with experts on Buddhism in Japan, Sub Continent, Sri Lanka, Tibet, Mongolia, Korea, China, Thailand and the rest of South East Asia. And the 8 chapters of their findings are a serious body of work that leaves no room for doubts that violence is truly a part of Buddhism, for better and for worse. First there are the Mongolian Buddhist Khans, whom engaged in acts of violence such as the forceful replacement of Shamanism with Buddhism as state religion, and the implementation of harsh code of conduct to its conquered subjects with torture and death as the punishment. And then there are the many Chinese wars with Buddhist monks participating in the bloodsheds. The brutal cleansing conducted by Buddhists in Sri Lanka. Japanese zen-soldiers and Thai military-monks that blurred the line between state troopers and religious practitioners. And the Korean war where Buddhist monks were at the forefront of the battle against "Imperial America", complete with its doctrine that demonised the US, a common practice in Buddhist warfare in de-humanising their enemies. Indeed, a lot of violence are conducted by Buddhists in the name of the state, to first and foremost protect nationalist interest, with few selected scriptures are used to justify the conducts. Verses such as "if a king makes war or torture with compassionate intentions, even those acts can result in the accumulation of vast karmic merit" and "the Buddhist axiom is that everything is suffering... since life is suffering killing one's neighbour is doing him a favor", among many others, are often used to justify their violent acts. If they sound familiar, it is because these kind of scripture-based justifications are also used by the likes of Christian Crusade in their "Holy War", Jewish extremists in confiscating lands, ethnic cleansing by Hindus in the partition of India and Muslim Jihadists in their terror attacks, and this makes Buddhist violence no different than any other religious violence. In addition, as the first Christian rulers in Europe relied on Christianity to gain support and win their wars, similarly the barbarians in Northern China and in Japan initially adopted Buddhism to gain military advantage in their wars. And while Buddhist extremists are rare, the attack on Tokyo subway in 1995 where Sarin Gas killed a lot of people was conducted by Buddhist militants, in the same manner Al Qaeda launch their offensives. Moreover, while some wars are conducted to defend a Buddhist community against "enemies" from different faith, there are also a lot of clashes between two or three different schools of Buddhism and traditions. The most eye opener example for me was the sectarian violence that occurred in Tibet during the life of the 5th Dalai Lama, where Tibet was actually divided before violence unite them together in such vicious manner, with the victor's version of Buddhism eventually became the official religion in Tibet until now. There are of course a lot more detailed examples written in the book, including the violent acts by Buddhists in everyday life outside the context of war, such as a forced self-mutilation on Chinese monks and the abuse on female Buddhist monks in chauvinistic sects. But this does not redirect our focus from the many majority of Buddhists that indeed live a very tolerant and peaceful life. Hence, as far as the objective of the book is concern, it is a pretty successful one in describing the complicated world of Buddhist violence without tainting the true religion. And it serves to understand that when it comes to violence all religion are the same, that it's almost always not about the religion itself but it's more about power struggle.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. On the nondual dhamma By Kindle Customer Excellent book. It's about time someone told the truth about the Dhamma as it is really practiced. The Sangha has always needed protectors: where such protection was lacking the practice was extinguished. Monastic practice is not the only way to be a "buddhist" (originally monks weren't the only dedicated or successful practitioners) it is simply the remaining praxis. The historical alliance with royalty politics protected the monasteries, but at a terrible price. The inadequacy of the western analytic approach to war and violence is on full display in this work and the Afterthoughts section by Faure does a decent job of raising the issue. It would require another volume to pick up the conversation from that starting point.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Anyone who wishes to understand Buddhism from a materialist perspective ... By Kassey Anyone who wishes to understand Buddhism from a materialist perspective -- rather than a purely theological/philosophical one -- must spend some time with this text.

Though traditionally regarded as a peaceful religion, Buddhism has a dark side. On multiple occasions over the past fifteen centuries, Buddhist leaders have sanctioned violence, and even war. The eight essays in this book focus on a variety of Buddhist traditions, from antiquity to the present, and show that Buddhist organizations have used religious images and rhetoric to support military conquest throughout history. Buddhist soldiers in sixth century China were given the illustrious status of Bodhisattva after killing their adversaries. In seventeenth century Tibet, the Fifth Dalai Lama endorsed a Mongol ruler's killing of his rivals. And in modern-day Thailand, Buddhist soldiers carry out their duties undercover, as fully ordained monks armed with guns. Buddhist Warfare demonstrates that the discourse on religion and violence, usually applied to Judaism, Islam, and Christianity, can no longer exclude Buddhist traditions. The book examines Buddhist military action in Tibet, China, Korea, Japan, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, and

shows that even the most unlikely and allegedly pacifist religious traditions are susceptible to the violent tendencies of man.

"Anyone with idealized notions of Buddhism as a religion fully committed to peace and non-violence will benefit from this fine collection. Outlining how a range of Buddhists have participated in war and justified this apparent violation of their ethical principles, these essays shed new light on sacred violence, just-war discourse, religious nationalism, and religious institutions' collaboration with the state. This is a rich and timely book." ---Christopher Ives, author of *Imperial-Way Zen* "This book is essential reading for Buddhist scholars with any specialty, if only to foster new consideration of the systemics of Buddhist politics and new textual readings, historical framings, and theoretical frames. This volume provides fresh perspectives that make it a true contribution to the study of Buddhist violence and to Buddhist studies within global trends of religious violence."--*Journal of Global Buddhism*"An extremely valuable, edifying collection. . ."--*Current Intelligence*"A fascinating work. . ."--*Buddhadharma*"[T]he entire collection was a pleasure to read, and I recommend this important and timely work. Since it is such a rich and challenging resource about Buddhist martial, political, and legal violence, it can only serve to realign our understanding of this tradition in a more sophisticated and complex way."--*Religion Matters*"[T]he strength of the book is excellent. *Buddhist Warfare* deserves to be read by all Buddhist specialists and graduate students, particularly to those interested in violence in Buddhism. The book immensely contributes to Buddhist studies, the anthropological study of Buddhism, and political and Asian studies."--*Journal of Religion Culture*"[F]ull of weighty information about Buddhist attitudes to violence, warfare, and the dharma."--*Practical Matters Journal*"By taking the initiative to publish this collection of essays, Jerryson and Juergensmeyer have stimulated important dimensions of a discussion that is sure to garner much more attention from scholars of a variety of disciplinary perspectives in the future, as well as from thoughtful adherents of the Buddha's dharma. It is a welcomed and timely addition."--*Southeast Asian Studies*"*Buddhist Warfare* represents an important contribution to Buddhism studies in general and Buddhist violence in particular...This collection of essays is a foundation for scholars and students interested in reaching an understanding of the presence of political violence in various traditions of Buddhism."--*Studies in Religion* About the Author Michael Jerryson is Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at Youngstown State University. Mark Juergensmeyer is Professor of Sociology and Global Studies, and Director of the Orfalea Center for Global and International Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara.